Nixon's Legal Bills Put at $297,294.60

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Former President Nixon's Washington lawyers have run up $297,294.60 in legal bills so far, primarily for his effort to keep control of his presidential tapes recordings and papers, says Rabbi Baruch Korff.

Korff, Nixon's fund-raiser, disclosed the figure in reporting Thursday that public contributions have paid nearly half those bills, $145,000 so far.

Korff said the lawyers estimate the total bill, barring any unforeseen new legal action, will be between $350,000 and $400,000.

He said most of that is for handling Nixon's two major efforts, and the complex of cross suits connected with them, to get control of his presidential papers.

Nixon is suing for enforcement of an agreement signed with President Ford's advisers last Sept. 7 turning the tapes and papers over to him and storing them near San Clemente, Calif.

He also is challenging the constitutionality of the law passed by Congress last year directing the government to take possession of the tapes and papers and not let them out of the Washington area.

The legal action is being handled in Washington by lawyer Herbert J. Miller Jr. and his firm of Miller, Cassidy, Larroca, and Lewin.

Korff made a $25,000 payment Wednesday to the firm from public contributions to his U.S. Citizens Congress which is raising funds for Nixon's expenses. Korff said contributions sent to San Clemente are relayed to the fund.

He said he hopes to pay $55,000 next month with the help of fund-raising appearances in Dallas and said he expects to pay the full $350,000 to $400,000 before Labor Day.